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ABSTRACT

As the world becomes increasingly interdependent, the role of public education in the United States becomes correspondingly vital. In order for the United States to function in such a world its young persons, the leaders of tomorrow, must be able to understand how such a world works. Yet, as recent studies have show, the youth of the United States are woefully underexposed to other countries' languages and cultures, and to U.S. foreign policies. Many states have been responding to this need through the establishment of commissions to recommend ways of introducing broader instruction in international studies into schools, or have mandated some form of international education in all grades, from kindergarten through high school. A multitude of issues concerning global education has yet to be fully addressed, however, including specific questions as to teacher training and curriculum design and development. Comprehensive changes in education is implicit in the need for a more globally literate U.S. citizenry. (DB)

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INTERNATIONALIZING PUBLIC EDUCATION: PAST PRACTICES, PRESENT PROGRAMS, AND FUTURE PROMISES

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INTERNATIONALIZING PUBLIC EDUCATION: PAST PROBLEMS, PRESENT PRACTICES, AND FUTURE PROMISES

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

> Just for a moment, imagine that you were a first-class passenger on a huge spaceship traveling through space at a speed of 66,000 mph. You discover that the craft's environmental system is faulty. Passengers in some sections are actually dying due to the emission of poisonous gases into their oxygen supply. Furthermore, you learn that there is a serious shortage of provisions--food supplies are rapidly diminishing and the water supply, thought previously to be more than adequate, is rapidly becoming polluted due to fouling from breakdowns in the craft's waste and propulsion systems. To complicate matters even more, in the economy sections where passengers are crowded together under the most difficult of situations it is reported that many are seriously ill. The ship's medical officers are able to help only a fraction of the sick and the medicines are in short supply. Mutinies have been reported, and although some of the crew and passengers are engaged in serious conflict in one of the compartments, it is hoped that this conflict is being contained successfully; however, there is widespread fear as to what may happen if it cannot be contained or resolved within that compartment. The spacecraft has been designed with an overall destruct system, the controls of which have been carefully guarded. Unfortunately the number of technologists that have gained access to the destruct system has increased, and all of the crew and passengers have become uneasy due to evidence of instability in some of those gaining such access. What will you do? (Anonymous).

THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

Buckminister Fuller once called this "Spaceship earth" (Fuller,1981). If this spaceship earth were a global village of 100 people, one third of them would be rich or of moderate income, while two thirds would be poor. Of the 100 residents, 47 would be unable to read, and only one would have a college education. About 35

would be suffering from hunger and malnutrition, at least half would be homeless or living in substandard housing. If the world were a global village of 100 people, 6 of them would be Americans. These 6 would have over a third of the village's entire income, and the other 94 would subsist on the other two thirds. How could the wealthy 6 live in peace with their neighbors? Surely they would be driven to arm themselves against the other 94...perhaps even to spend, as American do, about twice as much per person on military defense as the total income of two thirds of the villagers (Heiss and McInnis, 1971).

AN INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

The United States emerged from World War II as the world's most powerful nation and continued to defend not only the democratic system of government but its national spirit of independence. In the ensuing years, America's own image was based on its perceived sense of relative self-sufficiency. However, subsequently, as we well know, not only has the balance of power politically shifted, but multiple sources of power have emerged--the non-governmental agents, such as international terrorists and multinational corporations. And events on one side of the globe--such as oil shortages, political uprisings, changes in trade balances, or fluctuating currencies--now routinely influence the needs and interests of more than 170 other nation states. Bonham (1978) reflects this trend by providing us with the following:

*Current U.S. investments abroad exceed $300 billion.
*Four out of five new jobs in the U.S. are generated as a direct result of foreign trade.
*One-half of the fortune 500 corporations are foreign based or foreign owned.
*One out of three U.S. acres farmed is designated for export.
*Pacific Rim countries now represent a $3 trillion economy, one which is growing at $3 billion a week.

These economic data, among many others, have led to a general consciousness that there is no longer a country in the world that can remain smugly independent. National boundaries are no longer any more real than lines of latitude and longitude. Other countries are not to be considered as outside customers but as a composite marketplace. Many would view it as less than ideal that it takes either today's economic realities or a technological threat to America's pre-eminence, such as the advent of Sputnik in 1958, to jolt us out of our parochialism to modify our perception of the world. For what it is worth, the drive for an economic competitive edge has spurred a growing recognition in the U.S. that the country must necessarily revise its view of America's role in the global world--one which demands a population that is knowledgeable about the political and economic balances of power, as well as one which is sensitive to the bonds of common humanity. Basically, what America appears to be learning from the recent global changes is the impelling need for a more world minded citizenry.

Accordingly, various educational task forces in the past few years have been appointed to assess the global quotient of the nation's students--only to confirm how woefully underexposed young people are to other countries' language and cultures, and worse yet, how

only marginally aware the students are of America's own foreign policies. For instance, the National Task Force on "Education and the World View" (1981) revealed that only ten to fifteen percent of U.S. college students could be presumed to be globally literate... that is, to "have an adequate understanding of the world..." The National Council in Foreign Language and International Studies also showed us that in 1979:

*40% of high school seniors thought Israel was an Arab nation.
*38% of high school seniors thought Golda Meir was once a president of Egypt.
*20% of high school seniors could not locate France or China.
*Only 15% of American high school students now study a foreign language.

One might add that only five percent of prospective teachers study international affairs or foreign cultures. This data, as well as other supporting evidence, reveal that American students international awareness level represents a startling degree of global illiteracy. And yet the U.S. is the most schooled society in the world. Continued insensitivity and ignorance of this magnitude can only mean that, in the remaining years of this century, America's youth will be facing a highly complex and volatile world situation for which they are only minimally prepared. Clearly, students must improve their global comprehension. They need to be taught the knowledge, attitudes, and expertise to adapt to the tremendous rate of change ensuing from a global network of informational and technological exchange; they need to understand the dynamics of ethnic and linguistic pluralism in the U.S. and throughout the world; and they

need, in effect, to develop the awareness that what one nation does can deeply affect the rest of the world.

The international social, economic, and political forces that are currently prevailing in America are clearly not new phenomena, but ones that have been dramatically precipitated through recent political and economic realities, as well as immigration patterns. This rapidity of transition imposes unique challenges for the nation's schools to respond with a repertoire of knowledge, attitudes, and skills appropriate to students living in a connected world system.

GLOBAL EDUCATION AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Although the United States is pledged under the 1975 Helsinki Accords to encourage the study of other cultures and foreign language as an important means of strengthening international cooperation, few elementary and secondary teachers have been trained with the ability to incorporate international content, concepts and skills as part of classroom instruction. To reverse this situation, the President's Commission on Foreign Language Studies (1979) called for the actions necessary to build competence in the area of international studies. Through the Commission's report, as well as other studies, global education gained added momentum in its attempt to prepare students more adequately for life in a world increasingly characterized by change, ethnic diversity, and international interdependence.

Global education as it relates to teachers and/or students from kindergarten through senior high school, is variously defined. The common denominator, however, is that global education focuses on

interdisciplinary approaches which view the world as a system, i.e. issues concerning the environment, economics, hunger, and human rights. The reports of the various national task forces have served to affirm, publicly, the importance of an international focus and the consequent need for the nation's schools to design globally-oriented programs. The states have addressed the challenge through a variety of approaches. Vrcan (1986) has shown us that twenty states have either established commissions to recommend ways of introducing broader instruction in international studies into the school, or have mandated some form of international education in all grades from kindergarten through high school. In New York, a redesigning of several social studies courses has been mandated, and an international component is to be included on the Regent's exam. Arkansas has legislated that global perspectives be infused throughout the curriculum. In Florida, a state office of international education has been established (Kniep, 1986). California recently mandated three globally-related bills. 1) Provision that human rights education be required in high schools and be recommended for inclusion in pre-secondary curricula; 2) provision that information be collected on the development of nuclear-age education curricula; and 3) provision for the funding of international resource centers throughout the state.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO OUR STUDENTS?

Imagine that you were to be a teenager in a Third World country. Your day would begin at dawn, before many U.S. teenagers are awake. There are chores to do before breakfast, such as feeding the

animals, carrying water from the well and lighting the cooking fires. Because most families do not have appliances such as stoves and refrigerators, foods must be made fresh every day. In some cultures grain is ground on a large stone and made into flat bread such as tortillas in Latin America and chapatis in India. If rice is the staple food, it is often served as a type of watery rice soup for breakfast. During food shortages, breakfast is often omitted or the family may subsist on scraps and leftovers from the previous day in order to save on fuel for the cooking fire as well as food.

If the family makes its living by farming, both boys and girls spend at least part of their day working in the field. Often children drop out of school during busy seasons on the farm so that they can help their families. Many, particularly girls, never go beyond primary school because they must help support the family. By the time they are teenagers, less than half are still in school. The others spend 10 to 12 hours per day working in the fields or doing other jobs for the family. The machines and tools used for farming are simple--small hand tractors that look like lawn mowers, various types of hoes, and a machete or scythe. At harvest time, animals are often used to power a contraption used to thresh the grain, often the same system that has been used for centuries.

The young girls combine agricultural work with caring for the younger children, doing laundry in a pond or stream, making clothes and preparing food. At least once a week many young people take the family's produce to a local market to sell where they set up a small table or lay their goods out on the ground.

Chances are that the village you would live in would have no supply of clean drinking water. All the water used for cooking and bathing would come from the same stream, well, or pond and must be carried in pots or other containers, usually by the women and young girls. If anyone in the family developed a medical problem a doctor or clinic would usually be a day's walk away. Common health problems include malnutrition, intestinal diseases such as dysentery, and infections caused by poor sanitation.

Why should our students have this type of information, these feelings, this awareness? Is there anything to be said for empathizing with that world outside of our small borders?

CONCERNS AND PROSPECTS

Although California's and many other states' efforts toward internationalizing precollegiate and collegiate instruction augur well for the future of international studies, educators must not remain complacent, nor become overly positive about the modest advances of the past few years. Of considerable concern are the detractors who misunderstand and/or are threatened by curricula that expose students to world perspectives which may vary from the conventional U.S. centered views. Equally perplexing is the realization that approximately seventy-five percent of today's teachers will be teaching at the outset of the 21st century. Teachers who have had little, if any, exposure to international perspectives in their professional preparation (Klassen and Leavitt, 1982). Other challenges need also to be brought to light and resolved through

rigorous examination and appropriate action. Among the many concerns are a few questions, in particular (Haglund, 1988);

1) What are the most effective strategies for enlightening state credentialing agencies, school board members, school administrators, parent groups, and School of Education faculty about the rationale for global education?

2) Should global education be infused throughout the K-12 curriculum or be designed with its own identity such as a one-year course at the secondary level (or should both approaches be considered)?

3) How can advocates of the Back-to-Basics movement be convinced that global education is a basic requirement for living productively in the 21st century and must be included in a Forward-to-Basics program?

4) What evidence can be brought to bear that 'civic education' involves an international dimension, along with personal responsibility, for a more effective national and world order?

5) What are the necessary steps to help clear state adopted texts of biased information, either by omission or commission?

6) If, in fact, there are parameters to global education, what are the criteria for excluding such topics as peace studies, future alternatives, hunger, and human rights issues?

7) How best can staff development programs prepare both teachers and teacher educators to teach complicated, controversial world issues with integrity--in a balanced dispassionate, and non-partisan manner?

8) In view of the commonalities shared by multicultural education and global education, what steps are necessary to fuse the areas so as to benefit from the strengths of each?

9) What changes need to be made in university social science and teacher education programs to yield internationally, culturally aware teacher practitioners?

10) How can foreign language teaching at the university level be modified so as to prepare foreign language teachers for teaching in a wider variety of languages according to the communicative approach?

11) If emergency credentialing practices become widespread due to the projected teacher shortage, (in 1986 Roth stated that by 1992 the supply reportedly will be only 65% of the demand) what are the added implications for inservice global education?

Clearly, there are many provocative issues to be examined, as well as many detracting influences to be confronted as we strive toward the goal of international competency among educators and students. Needed are model education programs that have effective international dimensions within the sequence of both coursework and outside of school experiences.

What are some examples of what we should be doing to enrich the international dimension of our colleges and public schools? Perhaps it would be more productive to pose some questions about typical activities in our schools (kindergarten through college) which would represent ordinary rather than extraordinary experiences for our students. Here are ten such questions we could use as a starting point (Kenworthy, 1978):

1) In addition to your regular instruction in English, are you offering language classes in at least two of the following languages--Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Japanese, and Spanish?

2) Have you discarded most of your mercator projection maps as obsolete and are you now using largely polar projection or air-age maps? Are other parts of the world often in the center of such maps; not just the U.S.A.?

3) Are you devoting considerable attention to the two-thirds of the earth's surface which has long been neglected in schools and which is owned by no nation at the present time--the world's water?

4) Has your library purchased at least 250 books in the last five years (approximately 50 per year) on parts of the world outside the U.S.A., on the U.N. and on global concerns?

5) Have at least half of your teachers and administrators had some travel, study, and/or work experiences in countries other than the United States?

6) Are large parts of your social studies programs devoted to the majority of people in the world who live in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East?

7) Does your school curriculum go far beyond an annual celebration of United Nations Day or Week to have students learn about the many aspects of the U.N.?

8) Do your students have opportunities to live with and learn from the rich variety of human beings in the United States? Do you use as resource persons the individuals in your student body from different ethnic, racial, religious, and economic backgrounds?

9) During the past year have you had at least one visitor a month from outside the U.S.A. as a resource person in your school or college?

10) Does your college or school system have an active, on-going exchange or affiliation with at least one school in another part of the world, involving parents and teachers, as well as pupils?

These are merely samples of questions which might be asked of any college or school system concerned about the global dimensions of education.

SUMMARY

Comprehensive change in education is implicit in the need for a more globally literate America. It is as Kenneth Boulding conjectured, "If the human race is to survive, it will have to change its ways of thinking more in the next twenty-five years than it has in the last 25,000." Our task as international educators is to make a commitment to change and to make it clear that those who don't are playing with the fate of our youth. Cyrus Vance said it best when, shortly after his departure as Secretary of State, told a Harvard audience that our international affairs "require...understanding of a world in change. There should be no mystery. The mystery will be for the historian of 2000 if...we fail now to shape our future. The puzzle will be why we reacted against change in the world and did not seek to shape it."

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